

VZCZCXYZ0045
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBO #1144 0872206
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 272206Z MAR 08
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2091
INFO RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 0161
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ MAR 9343
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA PRIORITY 6036
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY 1430
RUEHPO/AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO PRIORITY 0124
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO PRIORITY 6690
RUEHGL/AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL PRIORITY 4359
RUEHUNV/USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA PRIORITY 0022
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCNDTA/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1908

UNCLAS BOGOTA 001144

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

FOR PARAMARIBO: PLEASE PASS TO WHA A/S THOMAS A. SHANNON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PARM](#) [CO](#)

SUBJECT: GOC SEIZES "UNENRICHED" URANIUM FROM FARC

GOC SEIZES URANIUM "EMPOBRECIDO"

1. (U) On March 26, the GOC confirmed that it had seized from the FARC approximately 30 kilograms of uranium "empobrecido" (unenriched or depleted) -- low in radioactivity, safe to handle with special equipment, and similar to material used in medical equipment, armoring material or counterweights -- from a drainage ditch south of Bogota. The military and the Technical Investigation Unit (CTI), in coordination with experts from the Ministry of Mines and Energy's Nuclear Affairs Office, located the material based on information contained in the Raul Reyes computers and tips from informants. Armed Forces Commander General Freddy Padilla said, "The FARC has been trying to procure uranium since 2005."

LOW RISK

2. (SBU) Ministry Nuclear Affairs Office experts quickly determined that the material was low in radioactivity and posed no risk to recovery personnel or the surrounding area. The officials conducted spectral and other analyses on the material -- two small blocks of approximately 15 kilograms each -- and reached the following conclusions:
--The first block, marked "Caution Radioactive Material DEH FTD Uranium" was unenriched and likely for use in medical equipment;
--The second block, marked "Caution Radioactive Material," was unenriched and likely used a counterweight for ships or aircraft or as armoring material due to its high density;
--"The material does not represent an immediate risk to the health of people or to the environment."
--"It cannot be used in the construction of nuclear weapons . . . or cause nuclear explosions."

GOC TO COORDINATE WITH DOE

3. (SBU) The Embassy is working with the GOC to coordinate additional GOC analysis on the origins and other details of

the seized material with contacts in the U.S. Department of Energy. The GOC has tentatively named Dr. Fernando Mosos and Dr. Jorge Vallejo as their POCs on technical issues. We will forward contact and other information to WHA/AND and ISR/CTR.

BROWNFIELD